

## **Audiological evaluation of preschool children in Portuguese and Cape Verdean Communities**

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### **Introduction:**

The hearing function is the cornerstone on which is built the complex system of human communication. The Acute Otitis Media is one of the most common etiologies of hearing loss in children attending school, mainly around 5 years of age. They appear asymptomatic so that only through auditory screening programs can we identify this type of situations early. So, if this type of hearing loss (though often small and temporary) occurs repeatedly, it can cause a negative impact on the auditory processing development, in the acquisition and development of language and in the school success of children.

### **Objectives:**

To determinate the prevalence of hearing loss among the Cape Verdean preschool children in comparison with Portuguese children of the same age and, consequently, to alert the importance of the hearing screening in preschool age.

### **Methods:**

The sample consisted of 84 preschool children (5 and 6 years old): 42 Portuguese and 42 Cape Verdean. An anamnesis was performed on the parents and / or guardians of the children, an otoscopy, a tympanogram and a Pure Tone Audiogram screening ("pass / fail") at the frequencies of 1000Hz, 2000Hz and 4000Hz.

### **Results:**

In the present study, no statistically significant differences were found in the results between children of both nationalities.

### **Conclusions:**

In view of the findings of this study, and of the information acquired, it is important to emphasize that, in addition to dissemination and awareness raising, one of the proposals for Cape Verde is the implementation of neonatal screening programs, followed by the subsequent implementation of preschool and school screenings. It should also be implemented in Portugal in a systematic and obligatory way.